



# News from White Haven

Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site, dedicated to Civil War General and 18th President Ulysses S. Grant and his wife, Julia Dent Grant, is located in south St. Louis County, Missouri.

News from White Haven is a quarterly publication of Ulysses S. Grant NHS. It is also available online by visiting [www.nps.gov/ulsg/](http://www.nps.gov/ulsg/).

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## Park Hours

We are open daily from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m., with tours of White Haven offered from 9:30 a.m. until 4 p.m. Please call ahead for information on special programs and events.

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.



The government shutdown in October disrupted many facets of American life, including shuttering its 401 National Park Service sites. We are glad to have that behind us, and we are so glad to be back to the work of preserving and interpreting here at White Haven.

We are making plans to reschedule the events that had to be cancelled due to the shutdown. The Lincoln and Grant presentation planned for October will now take place in February (see back page for details) and we hope to find a time to bring historian William C. "Jack" Davis to the park sometime in

the future. Many of the groups who had planned to come to the park while we were closed were able to arrange to come to the park on different days.

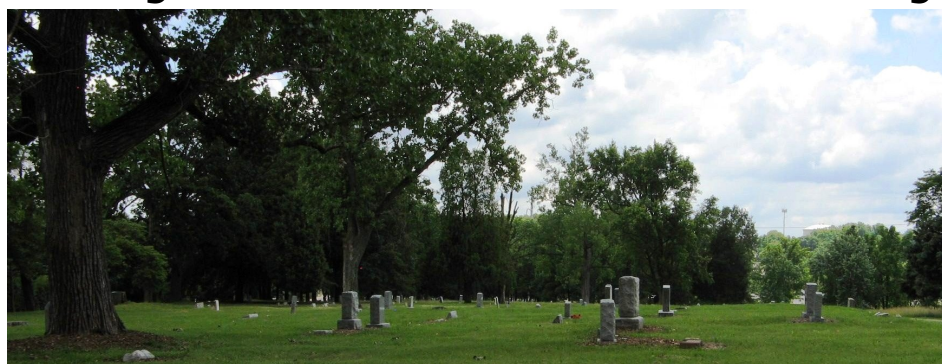
We appreciate all of your words of support and appreciation of your parks in the last few months and always. We do the work we do so you get the best possible experience out of your park. Whether you visit daily on your morning walk, you came here once on a road trip, you make the annual trip for one of our programs, or you just know us through our newsletter or Facebook page, this park is here for the benefit and inspiration of all.

# African American History Preserved in Local Cemetery

Less than five miles from Ulysses S. Grant NHS lies Father Dickson Cemetery. Established in 1903, the cemetery is named after Moses Dickson, who was born in Ohio in 1824 but came to St. Louis in the 1830s. Dickson, a free African American, helped found the Knights of Liberty, an organization dedicated to abolishing slavery.

Dickson joined the U.S. Army during the Civil War, after the Emancipation Proclamation became effective. Later he helped organize the Missouri Equal Rights League. He became an ordained minister of the A.M.E. Church, and in 1872 he established a fraternal organization to help members pay medical bills. As founding member, Dickson became known as Father Dickson. He died in 1901, and his remains were moved to the cemetery named for him in 1903.

The cemetery is also the final resting place for soldiers from the United States Colored Troops (USCT), who served in segregated units during the



The Friends of Father Dickson work hard to maintain Father Dickson Cemetery and honor those buried there. *Photo: Friends of Father Dickson*

Civil War. Veterans from these regiments donated over \$6,000 to establish a Missouri School for African Americans located in Jefferson City, now known as Lincoln University.

Another founding member of Lincoln University was St. Louis native James Milton Turner. Born into slavery in 1839, Turner was freed when his father purchased freedom for himself, his wife, and their young son. James was secretly educated in St. Louis and attended Oberlin College in Ohio. Turner served as a civilian aide during the Civil War. His political connections led to his 1867 appointment as Assistant Superintendent of Public Schools by Missouri

Governor Thomas C. Fletcher.

Turner supported the Republican Party in the 1870 mid-term election and caught the eye of President Grant, who named him Consul General to Liberia in 1871. After returning in 1878, Turner continued his public service until his death in 1915. He is buried in Father Dickson Cemetery.

The cemetery is owned by the Friends of Father Dickson, which is working to place the cemetery on the National Register of Historic Places. More information can be found at their Facebook page, Friends of Father Dickson Cemetery.

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## Bellefontaine Cemetery: History, Beauty, and Remembrance

In 1873, President Ulysses S. Grant visited St. Louis, bringing the remains of his father-in-law, Frederick F. Dent. Grant and his brothers-in-law selected a gravesite at Bellefontaine Cemetery and exhumed the remains of Mrs. Ellen Dent from the White Haven farm to be interred

alongside her husband.

Established in 1849 at the height of the rural cemetery movement (its north St. Louis city location was rural at that time), Bellefontaine Cemetery is not only a final resting place, it was designed as a “community classroom” for

learning about civic leaders and inspiration.

It remains an active cemetery, committed to sharing the stories of its permanent residents. Information about walking, virtual, and Civil War tours can be found at [bellefontainecemetery.org](http://bellefontainecemetery.org).



## Spotlight on the Park: Sales Area

The numbers are in and sales are up in the Ulysses S. Grant NHS sales area operated by our partner, Jefferson National Parks Association. Topping the list of most popular merchandise are our site-specific items: postcards, bookmarks, magnets, pins,



The sales area in our visitor center features Civil War sesquicentennial merchandise as well as a wide variety of books.

patches, T-shirts, and ornaments. The list also includes sales of both Ulysses S. Grant's and Julia Dent Grant's memoirs, always popular with visitors.

National Park Service passes, including Senior and America the Beautiful, were very popular this year, with 360 individuals over the age of 62 purchasing the Senior pass to take advantage of the lifetime pass to visit national parks, historic sites, seashores, and battlefields.

We are always changing and adding new items, so stop by and check out what is available for purchase—great gifts for others, as well as yourself. And remember, your purchase helps support programs at our site.

## Meet the Staff: New Volunteer Sadie Troy

Hello, everyone. My name is Sadie Troy and I am a new NPS volunteer. I came to Ulysses S. Grant after spending my summer volunteering at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello. It was at Monticello that I realized how much I thoroughly enjoy working at museums and wanted to continue that work at home in St. Louis. I have always loved history but knew that classroom teaching was not my cup of tea. However, after working at Monticello, I knew I had found my niche. I really enjoy working with school groups, teaching kids about history while showing



them how to have fun in a museum. I now divide my time during the week volunteering here and at the Missouri History Museum in St. Louis's historic Forest Park.

Here are the pertinent details about me: 1. I am fascinated with the Bubonic Plague. 2. I love my dog, Buster, more than a sane person should! He's a 14-year-old yellow lab with one good eye. 3. I have a favorite Founding Father: John Hancock. 4. I have a tattoo that reads "History is who we are and why we are the way we are."

## Kids' Corner: Memorials and Memory

What do tombstones tell us about the people who are buried beneath them? Look at the pictures below and compare and contrast the two very different monuments to the individuals buried there. Are they simple or elaborate? What words appear? Is there any symbolism in the

decorations? Keep in mind: Frederick F. Dent and his wife, Ellen W. Dent were the parents of Julia Dent Grant. They are buried in Bellefontaine Cemetery in St. Louis. Ulysses S. Grant, and his wife, Julia Dent Grant, are buried in Grant's Tomb, in New York City.





**Ulysses S. Grant NHS**  
**7400 Grant Road**  
**St. Louis, MO 63123**  
**(314) 842-1867**

## Upcoming Events

- December 14: Holidays at White Haven, with activities aimed at children ages 5-12. 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- January 25: Actor Bill Barker as Thomas Jefferson, 1 p.m.
- February 9: “A Most Unsettled State” performed by the Old Courthouse Players, time TBA.
- February 22: Actors Fritz Klein and Larry Werline as Lincoln and Grant, 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.
- March 15: Author Cher Petrovic speaks on her book, St. Louis in the Civil War, 1 p.m.
- March 29: Actress Pam Brown as Mary Lincoln, time TBA.

*Call the Ulysses S. Grant NHS visitor center at 314-842-1867 x230 for reservations for these programs.*

## Did you know?

Frederick F. Dent, Julia Grant’s father, has the distinction of being the only Missourian to die in the White House. According to a letter from President Grant to his brother-in-law, written on December 16, 1873, Colonel Dent died at 11:45 p.m. on December 15. From the letter, it appears that Dent had been ill for at least

five months, but on the morning of December 15 he had “partially dressed..., ate a hearty breakfast, [was] sitting up, and smoked his cigar with apparent relish.” The Grants went out for the evening, and when they returned shortly after 11 p.m., found the doctor with Colonel Dent. Grant stated that Colonel Dent passed without struggle, and

that “it was a clear case of life worn out purely by time,--no disease, care or anxiety hastening dissolution.” Although Grant disagreed with his father-in-law on numerous issues over the years, it is evident that Grant respected him and focused on their shared love for Julia and their family rather than their differences.